



HOKELE KAHIKO

William Linville....



I.

Remember:

Your feet in the salt ponds,
Chinese ducks flying up,
The three grass houses,
McCully's spirit catchers.

Recall:

The hollow thunder
Of trolley wheels
Over the wooden bridge.

Riding backwards:

Watch the treetops recede
To blue untouched distance,
No freeway, no canal.

Mānoa Kahawai

It is time which flows down Mānoa like a white-water stream. Mānoa stream, itself, is a lovely slow meander of crayfish and water bugs. Beautiful brown keikis play along that stream. In sunlight, shadow, in the moment.

But the stream of time bumbles and clicks along, like boulders in a mountain stream, the years tumbling, eroding their outline, reducing their drama to a nowness.

Lino died some time ago. I cannot say exactly how long ago. The stories I remember about him exist out of time. One story might be of his childhood, the next of the difficult times of his early twenties. His life was not like that. His time flowed from happenstance to struggle, and ended abruptly when it seemed about to reach success.

I have reorganized and restructured these events according to my own memories. I do not wish to excuse inaccuracy, but to suggest a different perception.

I have notes to him from local publishers who wanted him to continue writing. His first poems had just been published and he felt that it was the right time to put right all the flaws of his short life. In trying to do that he died.

In his early thirties he was like modern Hawai'i. A blend of kahiko and ana hou, struggling with that paradox.

Hawai'ian was not Lino's native language, but he recognized the beauty and value of the language. He was

following his study of the language at the time of his death. He referred to his poetry as "Hapa-Haole Music", but to those who knew his work it was not nearly so light hearted as the music of the twenties and thirties which goes by the same name.

Many of Lino's poems seem to be a bitter response to disappointment, and those have not been published. I wonder if that was fair. There is an indifference in our time to the plight of genius. As a painter, a poet, a dancer, Lino's words might have tempered the struggle of humanity in what often seems to be inhuman conditions.

Lino is gone. Agee House has burned to the ground. Hokele Kahiko has been "gentrified" out of existence. All these assertions about another time seem to grow inexact as time flows on.

Will Linville
Mānoa, Oahu
6/20/94

Hokele Kahiko

There, above the old road, on the elbow of the mountain, among shower trees and plumeria blossoms, looking down into o loko Mānoa, Hale Kipa Mānoa, Hokele Kahiko, was there long before the sub-dividers and exploiters, looking across the valley towards Mānoa Falls, invulnerable on its high bit of land.

All Mānoa was little farms and flower farms. The water ways and paddies shimmered under the mist that the old folks, the Kupunas, called "the love veil". It was more beautiful, in those days, than anything which remains.

Visitors came from Down Town Way by horse drawn vehicles. At the beginning of Lino's time the visitors came by Huff And Puff Bus, or in those four-door-convertible Fords that seemed to be made for Hawai'i only.

All the malihinis loved Hokele Kahiko. The main room was big and rustic, like a smaller version of Volcano House. There was a cryptomeria wood bar at one end of the room with padded leather topped stools. There were round koa-wood tables, each with four big, island style, chairs. The fireplace was between the two big view windows. There was rattan furniture with big splashy floral print upholstery on that side of the room.

There were twelve rooms for guests. Some were downstairs and 'round in back. Most of them were above with windows

looking mauka, makai, or diamondhead. Every room had the old fashioned koa wood furniture that was island made, simple koa lamp stands with lauhala shades. All the floors were covered

with big springy lauhala mats. Nobody, not the newest malihini, ever wore shoes inside Hokele Kahiko.

Aloft on the top floor, makai corner, diamondhead, there were two old fashioned floor-to-ceiling windows giving a view of St.Louis Heights down to The Quarry, along the ridgeline and Moiliili. The back slope of Diamondhead was breathtaking in the white and silver sunlight... and the curve of Waikiki between its salt ponds and its surf... palms flashing their silver edged blades... some few sails... and a steamer on the horizon line... the pink towers on the sand among gardens.

The Haku Hale Kipa, with remarkable perception, had placed a white rattan table and two carved chairs in that bright corner. Certain guests were known to spend the entire morning there with a pot of Oolong and a plate of sliced mango, butter from Mānoa Dairy and a basket of little round sourdough rolls from Lin Wai Yum's kitchen.

A particular guest from San Francisco came once each year. He loved Hokele Kahiko, its sights, its flavors, its ambience. He was a banker, the son of a well known Italian Banker in his home city.

"I think", said Alexander to himself on the first morning of his third stay at Hokele Kahiko, "That I should do all I can to preserve this treasure and keep it a secret".

That afternoon Alexander sent off a cable to his father in San Francisco. He commissioned a broker in Honolulu to prepare a listing of all properties in the ahupua'a of Mānoa which might be part of the wonderful view and which might be purchased... from

the mountains to the sea.

Alexander was humming the song about "All the gold in the bank at Sacramento" as he left his broker's office on lower Fort Street that afternoon.

No one seems to remember Hale Kulani as it used to be. The many small charming restaurants Down Town, or in Waikiki, are long forgotten. No one will ever again experience the breezy coolness of the tiled halls of The Alexander Young. Well, the stream rolls on.

There sat Alexander, in his favored chair, the Oolong cooling before him, the glorious view momentarily frozen, preparing the deluge, believing that to "develop" would in some magical way "preserve".

THE CIGAR, A VERY SOPHISTICATED THING



II.

Above Beretania
The treeshaded lanes,
Golden showers and incense,
Climbing past the Old School
On Owl's Hill.

Honu Kahiki

The first groundlings came to Hokele Kahiko in the late 1930's. Regulars gathered about the fire on typical rain blown winter nights. They grumbled about the new arrivals and about the changes which followed.

Hokele Kahiko changed, and of course the bar, even the soft sound of an evening's conversation. Minnie, Freddie, Jackie, they all seemed to have names like that. Androgynous and who cared. They were all frivolity and self involvement. They talked only of clothes and cars and the places they had just visited, or not, and who cared?

Their purpose was to continue their mutual seduction and that of any susceptible bystander. Sexual conquest was only a small part of it for they were all too much in love with self for that to matter. What they really wanted was for every witness to their performance to hunger with pain to be just like them in every way.

They dully sparkled at each other in the Dining Room, The Bar, or at Twilight Hour on the Lanai. They never finished their drink, always left the larger portion on their plate. They dabbed daintily and set out for the Tea Dance at The Pink Palace.

Arriving back after the dinner hour they dragged their "Local Find" into the bar for display and captivation.

They were a bit like a road company for The Great Gatsby. Lacking a "star" to give their company "character" but trying to make up for that lack with incessant brittle glitter.

They went by pony to the falls, picnicking on the way back among the exotic flowers just beyond the little makeshift bridge on the Agee House Trail. They loved a "romantic interlude" there where the giant morning glory vine had completely overgrown the hau tree forming a dome like something out of Green Mansions. They scattered out across the meadow... straw hats... linen jackets... a parasol or two for quaintness... and the ponies whuffling. They listened desperately to "The Blanding Man" who told the tearful story of the Mānoa Princess, her Chief, and the Owl.

They were moved by their experience. The "heart of the islands" was a real thing to them. They talked about it over dinner and drinks. Secretly, each one alone felt the precious thing they nearly understood.

"I will return here... as soon as all these tiresome others have gone," they promised themselves. "I will build a simple and elegant little house." "I will live under the rainbows and among the ginger flowers." "It will be a life like one out of the old fairy stories."

Next morning they were sly, secretive and deceptive, wanting the precious thing for themselves alone.

"I have decided to leave now." "I guess I'm a bit bored." "I've booked passage for Wilmington on Mariposa."

But they had made a list of the things they would need to outfit their Fairytale Island House. Through the six days of their voyage the list grew like a Genesis tale.

Barker Brothers, The May Company, Eastern Columbia, Ralph's Grocers, The Model. Crates of "quality" household goods, the

best wines and delicacies, were delivered to the Matson Steamship Company's Docks in Wilmington, California consigned to the Matson Terminal in Downtown Honolulu.

The Groundlings were going to climb the Rainbow Bridge. Few of them had the lightness needed for that.

They called their brokers and ordered shares in Hawaiian Companies. They transferred annuities and accounts to the "safest bank in Hawaii". They came with no ladders and few safety nets... trusting the benevolence of the Polynesian Gods... as they understood them.

Next year they were surprised to find their old friends back in the Hokele Kahiko Bar... gossiping about the fireplace. They were clever about "the mysterious spell of the islands"... but none of them listened.

Year by year... a few remained... sweetening the changes in their elegant little houses.



III.

Watch the brisk ponies
Trot the perfect curve
At Roundtop's knees:
The little ford cats along.

White Palaces:
Once again in time's distance
Opening the valley's squares and paddies,
The Dragon Spine Ridge,
Waterfall perfectly visible,
Tender, unguarded heart.

Epipania Lepo Lo'i

In August of 1932 Juan Pintero arrived at the Hokele Kahiko. He had come from Wilmington as Second Waiter on Mariposa. He had heard about Mānoa Valley and Hokele Kahiko from one of the Kitchen Cleaners on his watch who had grown up there.

The man was a member of the Kaona family which had taro paddies in the upper valley. Some ancient impulse to wander had put him on Mariposa and introduced him to Juan Pintero. Pintero was a compelling figure, educated beyond his station, an artist in the Mexican mode.

On that August morning he appeared at the service entrance of Hokele Kahiko and asked to see the "Captain of the Kitchen". He was hired immediately.

Pintero had brought with him his paint box of Mexican colors. He had collected colors and a medium which existed nowhere outside of Mexico. As a student he had experienced the same types and styles as had formed Orozco, Siquieros, and Rivera. Pintero was deeply in their debt.

He worked as waiter, busboy, janitor, and he spent some time sizing up the empty plaster wall of the Dining Room.

But Pintero was not a man of words. He never spoke of his intention, he drew it. Oahu came to live in his sketches, line, mass, and color. He collected and stored until opportunity at last presented itself.

Does a master of his art need to ask permission? In the third year of Pintero's service at Hokele Kahiko, during the month

of April, the hotel was closed while the kitchen was modernized. Pintero shut himself in the Dining Room for three weeks and two days... and it was done.

Pintero retired to his little closet room behind the main staircase. He slept like Yahweh on the seventh day. And then he took paintbox and duffel bag and disappeared leaving nothing behind except his masterwork.

When the owners arrived to reopen the hotel they were surprised, amazed, and rendered speechless. Their Dining Room had become a Mexican Muralist's dream of a Mānoa Paradise. The wind was there, the rain, the smell of the land, the colors of sunlight, cloud shadow, and rainbow. The rustling of the trees, the movement of the taro leaves, distant sounds of animals and the people moving together as reality moves.

At first they were angry. Who had done this? Then they began to see what was there, and they became fearful. Now what? And they thought of the value in money. Would there be a bill to pay? The artist might sue. Better call a lawyer.

At last they sat quietly. Got themselves a drink. Began to study the mural. Began to realize what had been given to them.

Hokele Kahiko was known as "The Painted Inn" for a long time in the forties and fifties. Probably thousands of servicemen, tourists, and students came to see Juan Pintero's great painting. It was photographed, copied, written about and, at last, forgotten.

In 1962 Hokele Kahiko fell upon dark times. The tourists preferred the glitter of Waikiki. Nineteenth century country inns were out of style. The owners sold to a California company which

began to "modernize" without first evaluating the old building. A decorating firm from Maywood covered Pintero's mural with sheets of plastic and mock koa wood panels. Mānoa Valley, as it was in the 1930's disappeared for what seems a dark eternity.

What became of Pintero?

A Honolulu taxi driver once said that Juan Pintero lived out his life in Mexico City as a Museum Guard.

A surfer on the North Shore once swore that he was Pintero. Only a very old Mexican Muralist knows.



IV.

Strangers passing overhead,
higher than, the frigate bird,
"Ka 'iwa alai maka",
See muddy scratches
Worth less than city lots.

Mo'o Pilikia

Lenny Paka was one of several members of his family to live out the last years of his life at Hokele Kahiko. The first Paka probably arrived there some time early in the twentieth century. It became a Paka family truth that Hokele Hahiko, in the allegorical cool of Mānoa, with its impeccable Local Style Service, and its very familiar and comfortable accommodations, was the place to wait out recovery from illness, law problems, or a difficult end to life.

Lenny occupied the Paka Rooms, second floor, ewa, with bedroom, parlor, private bath, and a small shaded lanai overlooking the green slopes of Tantalus. He spent hours on his lanai dozing and reading Blavatsky, Besant, Krishnamurti, or Rudolf Steiner.

Kimo, the Second Floor Steward, brought a pot of Lapsong Suchong and a plate of palm leaf pastries every afternoon about four when the sun had crept around the corner of the old building and the up-valley breeze had begun.

More times than not, Kimo found Mr. Paka snoozing and muttering to himself. He never greeted awakening with enthusiasm, and Kimo often had to move fast to avoid a bleary swat as Lenny woke apparently fearing attack.

Hawai'i is, among other kinds of paradises, a paradise for small timid and harmless reptiles. The members of the Tribe of Gecko are legion. Visitors often think them "cute". Locals tend to think they are busybody meddlers snooping into

everything. They try to ignore them. They shoo them away. When really bothered, locals will send the hapless saurian spinning through the air with a flick of a forefinger.

As an old Hawai'i Hand, Lenny shared this contempt for wiggly creepers. When he awoke early one afternoon, sitting in his split cane lounge chair, his copy of Knowledge of Higher Worlds slipping onto the mats, his spectacles clutching the bridge of his patrician nose, to see a mature gecko apparently stalking him along the arm of his chair, he dealt with it in the indicated way.

The hapless creature traced a beautiful arc... duplicating that of the rainbow which spread through the Mānoa sky at that very moment... and plunged past the lanai railing and out of sight.

On the Lower Lanai an English Author and his wife were at that moment finishing a late lunch having arrived that morning on an Australian Ship from Fiji.

Significant screams and clatter were heard.

"Bloody bothersome creatures", muttered Lenny, resettling himself for a doze.

On the overhang, above and mauka of Lenny's chair, there was a rolled split bamboo shade of a type once used in Hawai'i before the invention of the more colorful plastic kind.

In the bamboo rod which constituted the center of the rolled shade another of Hawai'i's lizards had begun to build a nest. The bright green, pale yellow, fuchsia ruffed coco tree lizard. A feisty and adventurous little creature who clearly admires the

birds and often daydreams about flight while clinging to a palm leaf in the breeze.

While packing bits of green leaf into the open end of the bamboo, this creature had observed the way in which Lenny had dealt with the gecko.

The coco tree lizard disapproved. Lenny caught his dark look just as he slipped back into his interrupted doze. He slipped away, taking the disapproval with him.

"Stupid Mammal", twittered a bird-like voice in his golden afternoon dream. "Do you realize what you have done?"

"We Saurians have inhabited these islands since they were the Mountain Tops of Mu". "We were the original sentient beings of the planet". "It is fortunate for you that nature has cast us in differing scales."

Lenny whimpered, recalling how once on The Big Island, in the days of wild youth, he had been thrown from his horse while hunting pig in the upland forests.

He had awakened out of nightmares of the Mo'o to find himself on the floor of a grass house where the geckos scampered thick on the upper walls. The past lay thick but transparent upon the present.

Exactly then Kimo arrived with the tray of tea and pastry. His slight sound startled Lenny who bounded from his chair crashing into him with predictable results.

The British guests on the Lower Lanai did have an upsetting afternoon.

Older lifeforms seemed to think it was funny.



V.

Time
Bloodstains Mānoa Stream
Running unstaunched
To the Mother Sea.

'Onipa'a

His family wanted him to be somewhere else. There was no mystery about that, except the constantly recurring mystery of human generations. He was the youngest, and his thoughts, desires, values were different from the rest. They were certain of their own ways and certain that he was upsetting to them. They wanted him elsewhere.

He had a very small monthly income, barely adequate for one of the "round in back" rooms at Hokele Kahiko.

He had nearly graduated from a state college in California, but in the very last semester his family had botched that for him. He had been a Fine Arts Major, and his brothers had somehow got wind of it after most of the class work had been done. They convinced the parents that he was taking advantage of their love for him to cruise through four years of waste and partying. That was not so, he was a fairly good painter and gave evidence that he would become better, but his brothers were determined to think the worse of him and their imaginings frightened the parents. They refused to pay the final costs of college. Righteously wronged, he ran away to Hawaii, to the place where he had once spent a happy summer with his Grandmother. His small income was an inheritance from her, and it was almost as he expected to find her waiting for him at Hokele Hahiko.

But he was alone, in a small room which had probably been intended for kitchen help, and he was very unhappy.

One day he was sketching on the lanai when an elderly man

came over to watch him. "You are an artist?" asked the man. "I intend to be," the young man answered. "Perhaps you will have lunch with me and tell me what you think of Juan Pintero's painting."

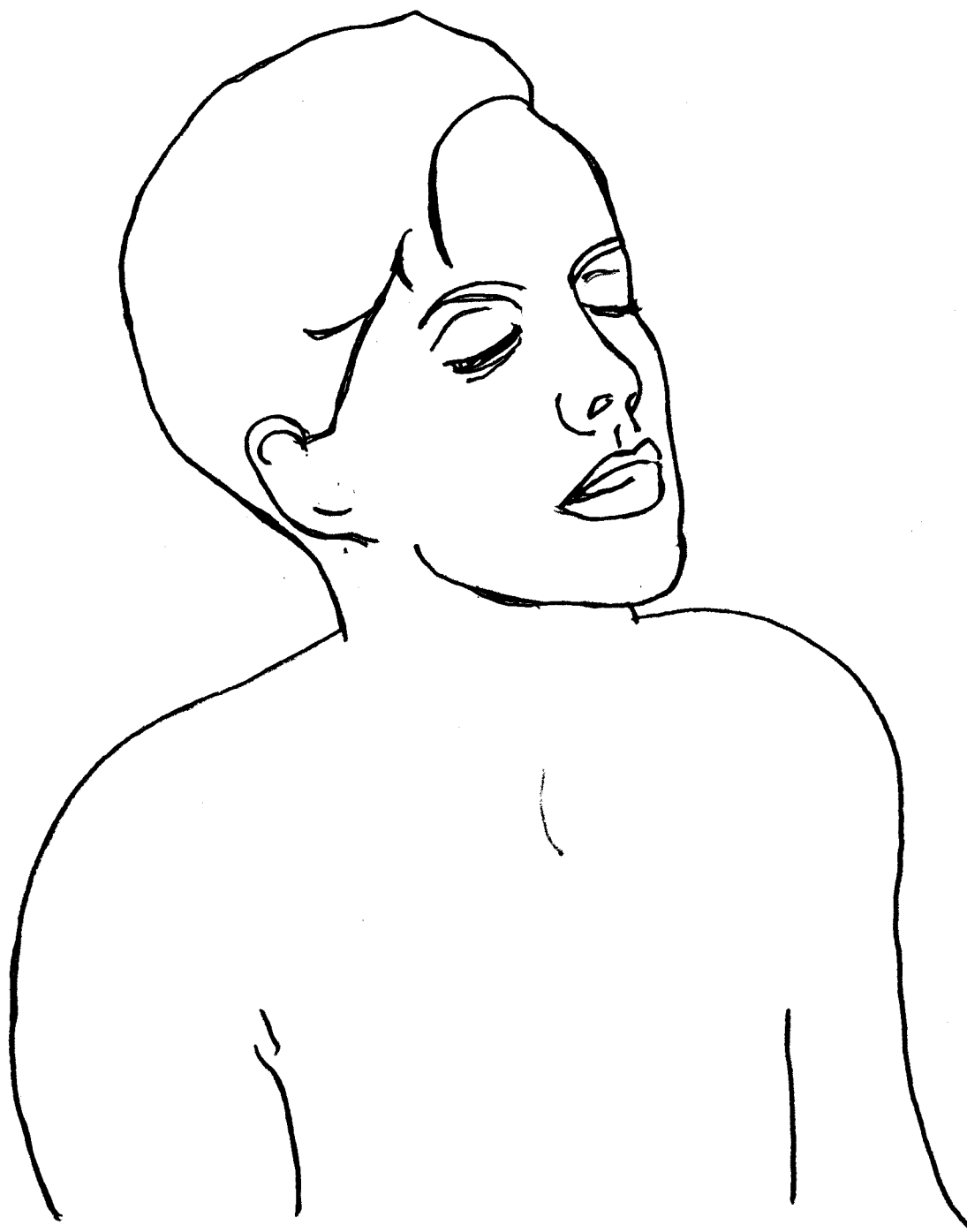
He was very hungry, and determined not to make a pig of himself, but Pintero's masterwork dazzled his self control. He talked with intensity about the painting and paid no mind to the double order of roast pork with sweet mango sauce, the browned yams in raw sugar, Mānoa lettuce vinaigrette, the chocolate custard, the Kona coffee.

At the end he found himself looking into the older man's smiling face... He gasped at his own entrancement.

"I'm very sorry", he said, "You must think I'm a child".

"I think you're a bright and hungry young man", his host said. "And I think you're not just hungry for dinner". "You must come and sit with me on the lanai... and tell me a bit more about your ambitions."

They talked through the afternoon. He sketched between their words, the others on the lanai, the shadows under the kumulā'au, the reddening of Mānoa's golden evening, the striking diagonals of the rain.



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VI.

Forgetting,
I discover I'm wearing
Someone else's shoes,
Eating poor boy stew,
While country girls
Look at me
As if I'm crazy.

After darkness had covered the valley in its sparkling cloth, muting but not subduing the colors of the day, they moved into the bar. They took the table just to the left of the fireplace, where they continued to watch the valley as the full moon rose out of Wilhelmina Ridge darkness.

He talked about his wish to be a painter, about his brothers and their misunderstanding of his intentions. He spoke of his elderly parents and their unhappiness. He described his experience at the state college, the instructors who had encouraged him.

And after all the hours of talking he came at last to the description of one particular painting. He said that it would be a reflection of the triumph of the spirit over the traps of the material world. He spoke of it as if it were already done... a part of the real world... as if it already hung there over the fireplace... brightening the room and lifting the spirits of all who saw it.

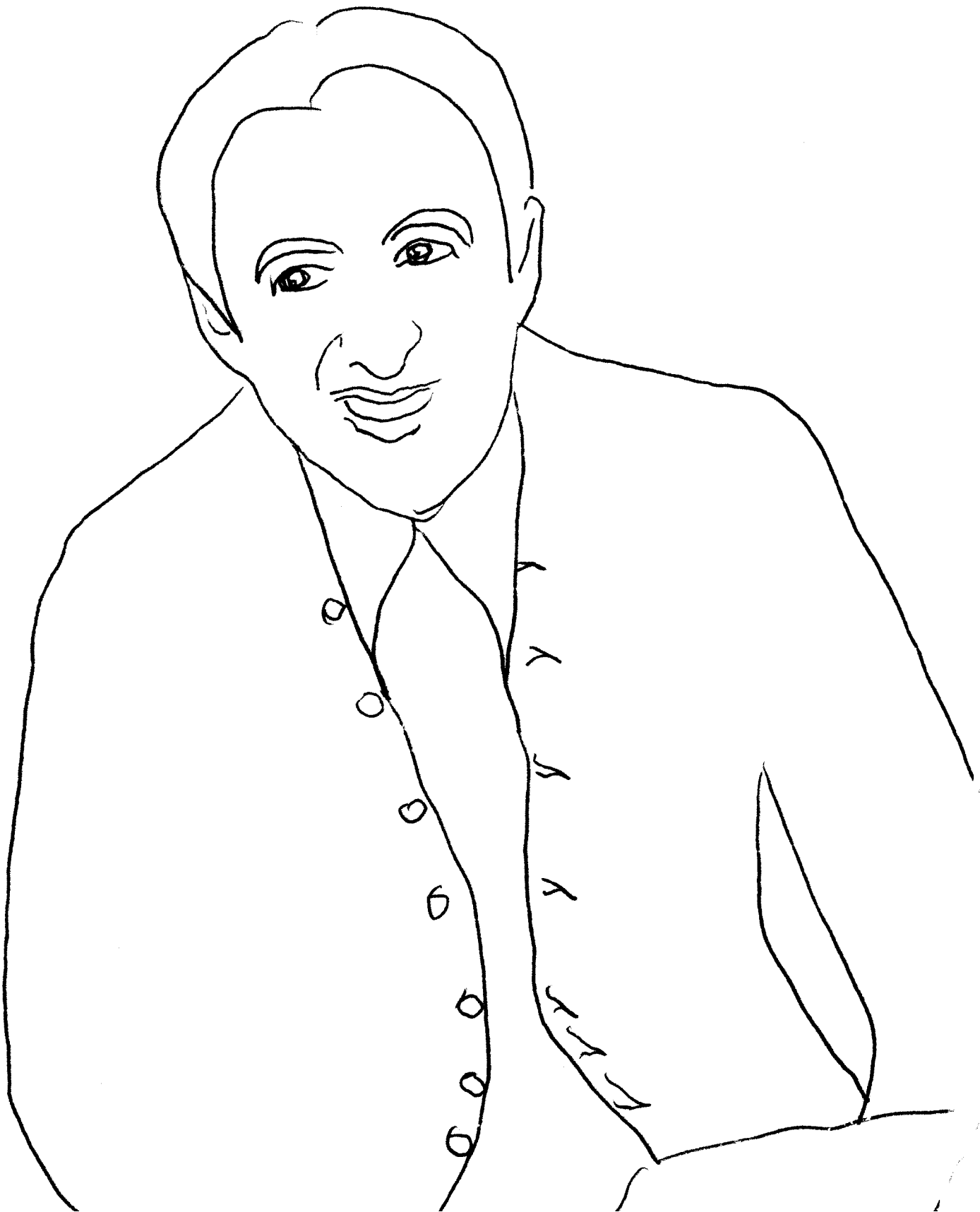
There was a space of silence as the moon climbed higher over the valley.

The young man sat with his head bowed... suspended over his dream. For the older man it was as if the Kamuela Wind blew fresh and young again. His future had once sparkled like morning in the meadows. The boy's words had brought it back to him. He had hoped and expected... and lost it some where.

"If you will do as you say," said the older man, "Finish your work here at the University of Hawaii, paint a painting like the one you describe, I will support you in whatever way I can until you have completed your beginning."

Things of this kind were once done in the world... goals of the mind and spirit... the actual riches of humanity... have been truly prized... in other times.

For many years a prized painting hung over the fireplace in the bar at Hokele Kahiko. It was called "Onipa'a" by the Haku Hale Kipa... and the years did not dim its meaning. Over a dark sea and under looming clouds a brilliant shaft of light fell upon a small boat determinedly going where it had to go.



VII.

In Mānoa Valley
The rain still surfs
Against Mo'o Ridge,
In a heave of rainbow,
Old ghosts wrestle
In the ancient war.

'Oni Aloha

Who could write of Hokele Kahiko without speaking of its attraction for lovers? It was the place where we met for a century of couples. It was the Honeymoon Place for twice that number. Many agreed that it was the most romantic place on the Island of Oahu.

Some came to Hokele Kahiko looking for love and, of course, some came looking for their own physical satisfaction. Predator and prey meeting in a romantic paradise.

Morgan belonged to one of those centuries. With her head full of theatrical romance and considerable confusion. She had been judged "Miss Baltimore" that year, not "Miss Debutant Baltimore," she came from the wrong side of town for that. She was nearer to being "Miss Business Baltimore" if there had been such a title. She was a pretty redhead with short tight curls and a confronting manner. She liked to say that it was her uncle, "the biggest automotive dealer in Baltimore", who was responsible for her winning the title. She liked to hint that there was some "irregularity" in their relationship and to imply that generally she was a "very hot number". That was all pure theater.

It was clear to anyone who listened that Morgan's life had not been a happy one but it had made her flexible and courageous.

Morgan liked to spend a weekend at Hokele Kahiko as often as she could afford it. The rest of her life was spent in maid's

quarters in a big house in Kahala. She was an Art student at the university, because she quite honestly liked looking at paintings. She was not a gifted artist herself though she did paint. She was only good at it.

In a time when there were no good jobs for a young woman in Honolulu, Morgan earned money as she could. She was often a part-time waitress. She had tried working as a cocktail waitress, which paid better, but she did not enjoy the overly friendly attitude of the customers. She preferred to work at The Ala Moana Coffee Shop where she served the "blue plate" to tourists and retired people. Her customers seemed to thrive on her pretty presence and her youth as surely as upon the food which she carried to them.

She was doing well enough and she voiced no complaint but the course of her life was completely changed one weekend at Hokele Kahiko when two important events occurred. First, she spent a quiet afternoon looking at, and really understanding, the painting over the fireplace in the bar and, second, she met Timmy Matsu.

She was sitting near the painting, studying it, when Timmy came up to her table. He was like a well polished sword. He spoke in a gentle and cultured way. His nails were manicured. His clothing was tasteful and expensive.

Timmy was a "trapper", a predator who snared young women for the prostitution syndicate.

He introduced himself to Morgan as a high school teacher from Wahiawa, which indeed he was, among many other things. He asked Morgan about her interest in painting. He suggested that

they might visit the Art Academy on Thomas Square. He asked if he might join her, sat down, ordered drinks. He was charming, and he gave one of his very best come-on performances.

Morgan knew exactly what was going on. She had an instinct that this was to be a useful experience.

After a week of expensive restaurants and hotels, drives around the island, and starlight cruises, Morgan had a list of facts about Timmy, his lifestyle, and his close associates. She knew his family and their address. She knew the head of the high school where he taught. She had taken control of the situation.

"Timmy", she said, "maybe I love you, but I have to be an artist." "Nothing else matters to me." "You have to help me now, after all we have been to each other." "You've got to help me make something of my life".

Timmy had faced tears and threats, but he was a salesman, and his reassurances had always won. He had never met a woman like Morgan before.

Morgan was accepted into the Honolulu Arts Community. For ten years she had one-woman shows of her paintings and she assisted unknown artists to have shows of their own work. Timmy was always there giving whatever assistance she required of him. He kept his business activities quietly to himself. Morgan became a Haole Auntie to his local wife and their six kids.

Morgan and Timmy had twisted together a lei of very peculiar strands at Hokele Kahiko.



VIII.

It is a glory,
Under the rain's prism,
The banner of race,
The semaphore of self,
To live out the mystery.

Lino

The Kaona 'ohana had always lived in Mānoa, but they had never owned the land where they lived, worked, and died. In the old days they merely lived on a familiar part of the ahupua'a, the mountainside to oceanside marked out by stone and "pig post". The land was just "aina", the land. Royalty and civil authority administered the land, but only Divinity might be said to "own" the land.

The Great Mahele came and passed and the concept of ownership of the land remained a mystery. Kalakaua's Constitution, forced "on a knife point", like The Magna Carta, gave power to "owners", but most had never seen a land owner.

The Kaona 'ohana continued to work, owned nothing, and had no political power. Ola lokahi was no longer real but the Kaonas went on growing the kalo and trading for fruit and fish with their neighbors. Later they found that if they grew watercress they could sell it for money. At first they carried it to Moiliili Crossing. Once they had a cart and a little horse they could take it "down town" where the price was better. By the 1930's they were selling cress and "Mānoa lettuce" to the one big hotel in Waikiki. A good market grew up there for fresh fruit, vegetables, and flowers. That is why Lino's mother was able to attend Roosevelt High School and to acquire the skills which won for her a good job in the office of Elephant and Castle Plantation. She was a bright lady, the first Kaona to live in the greater world.

And Lino was the first Kaona to cross Mānoa Valley and come up to Hokele Kahiko to look at Juan Pintero's Masterwork.

Lino stood before it in amazement. There was his valley, his home, his relatives, but portrayed in handsome dimensions. It was the beginning of his awakening.

If the management of Elephant and Castle had shown a modicum of the akamai, which most Hawaiians displayed every day of their lives in order to survive all the changes of modern times, there would have been no "long strike", no "labor dispute", and Lino's mother would never have met his father. Great good can come out of great discomfort.

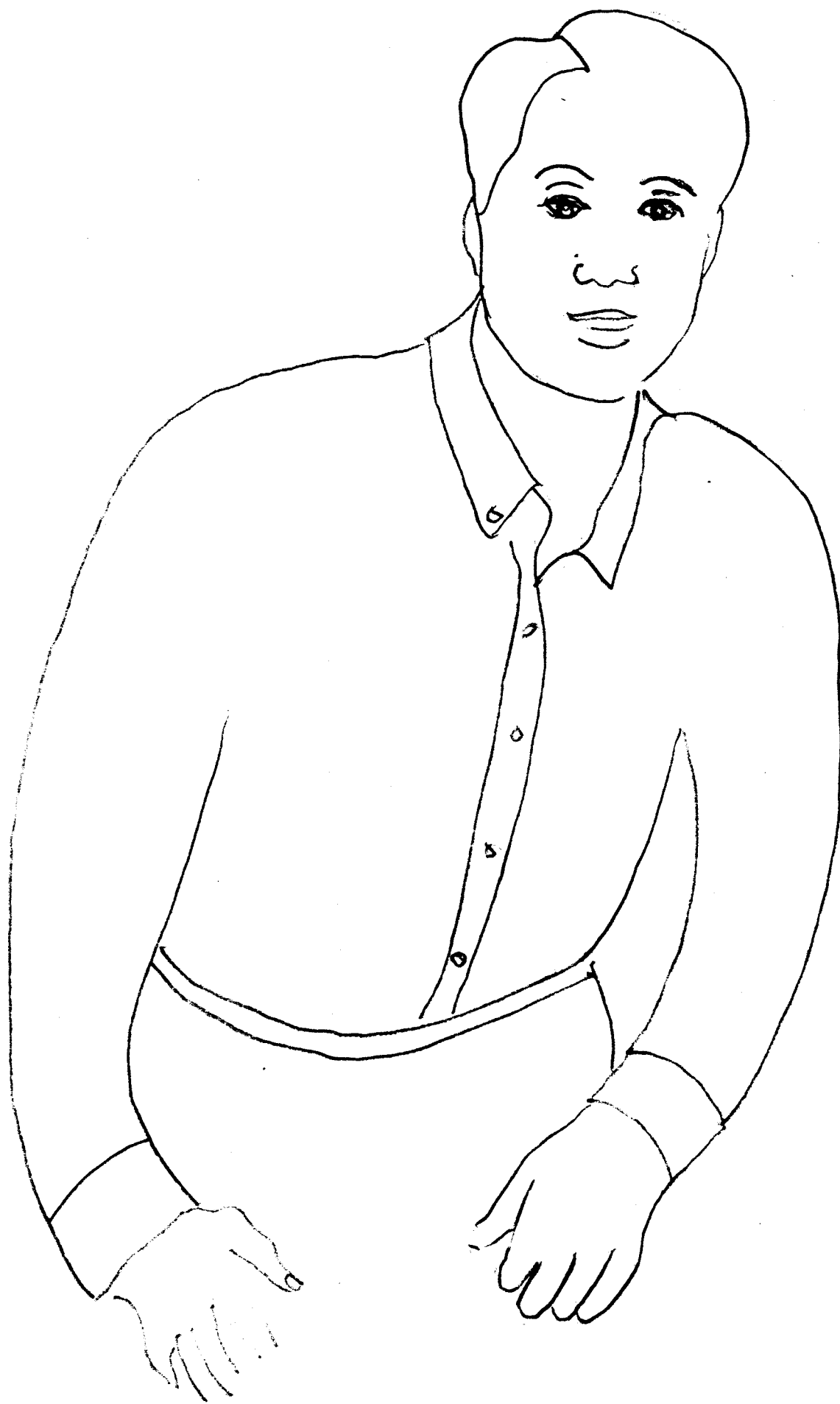
So Lino asked for a job at Hokele Kahiko. He was fourteen years old and still strong. His physical troubles had not yet begun. He became a bus boy in the dining room and he felt rewarded.

After clearing away the remains of lunch, and before preparations began to serve dinner, Lino had an hour each day to examine Pintero's mural. It was an hour in paradise during which the intellect was fed and the imagination expanded. Out of such joy grows purpose.

Lino wrote his first poems there. They began as notes to help him understand, and they grew into a separate work derived from the mural. They were songs of sunlight, moonlight, waking-up songs full of joy.

But, alas, the poet was fired for wasting too much time in the dining room. After that he spent a very depressed week sitting on the rocks where the "city kids" used to surf near Kewalo Basin.

Lino was a junior at McKinley High School. He saw that college was necessary and he began planning. He would get a job, save his money, apply to the University of Hawaii but be prepared to attend Leeward Community College for a couple of years if that was necessary. He was a poet, an artist, and the next time he visited Hokele Kahiko he would be a welcome, and paying, guest. He would study the mural, and the other painting, the one in the bar, as much as he wished to.



IX.

Those who understood
Have all gone away.

How can the valley
Be so full
And remain empty?

Spirit
Rises as mist
To the sun.

Ka ua 'ula
Kahiko o ke akua...¹

Mānoa is the place, and Hokele Kahiko is certainly the hotel which has always rejoiced in its unique relationship with the rain. In the old days it is recorded that Haole ladies went mad in the downpour.

It is a fact that there is more rain each year in Hana, Maui, or at "The Father of Rain" in the middle of Kauai, but Mānoa has always had the reputation.

For those who have lived all of their life in Mānoa the rain becomes a lotion. It soothes the sunburn of most other parts of Oahu. It nourishes all that is left of the primal forest. Tantalus, Roundtop, Upper Mānoa, the tropical rainforest that many tourists come searching for. Flame-in-the-Forest Trees, Shower Trees of any color, Jacaranda, Octopus Trees, Acacia, and all the fruit trees, wild or feral, Mountain Apple, Guava, Mango, Leechee, Tamarind, and more.

In the 1960's Agee House was deep in the rain forest at the end of Upper Mānoa Trail. The old house and its land was in the care of the University of Hawaii Art Department. The house was about the same age as Hokele Kahiko, and it was built in the same old island style. Monkeypod, koa, and cryptomeria japonica wood had been used throughout for structure and for decorative carved paneling. The rooms were a surprise in dimensions, shape, and view of the surroundings. Door moldings, window frames, stairways, were carved in vegetable forms to echo

¹ * Mānoa's rain... The adornment of The Gods. A very old saying.

the forest outside. There was a Great Hall with a volcanic stone fire place, a secret stairway, and a little private nook hidden up among the rafters. The streamside dining room had a huge window framing the upper valley and the falls. There were bedrooms, and parlors, and galleries, and a kitchen like something from an ocean liner. All this was part of the rain, and the forest outside, and another time entirely.

For a time Lino was a part of this. He had taken a summer class at The University of Hawaii. It was his first university class. His high school counselor had recommended that he begin immediately after graduation. He was full of joy at the prospect. The class was Life Drawing From The Human Figure and Ka'ihele Pono was the professor.

The little room among the rafters, at the top of the secret stairs, held a library of Art Reproductions, books that not many students could afford. Lino was the first in the class to discover the books and the room became his,

Ka'ihele Pono's classes were very popular, but they were demanding. Many of the students were lost in the concerns of their own lives. It was summer time and the beaches were not far away. The Freshman year is always a trying time, but for Lino there was no better reward. Agee House, the Art Books, the lectures and long studio sessions with models from the real world.

After his first shyness Lino entered into the work of the class with his whole attention. Ka'ihele Pono kept his eye on Lino's work. He saw the promise in his drawings and he moved his easel to the front row of the class so that his application and

the result might be an example to the class.

And a strange thing began to happen. As Lino grew more sure in his work, so that he could work with the model, asking her to move just a bit, to relax just a touch, to lean this or that way, he became unaware that he was a member of a group, or was supposed to serve as an example to others. So far as he was aware, most days he was nothing but alone in Agee House, with the jungle just outside the windows, the rain on the heavy roof, the oblique shafts of golden light coming down past the unbelievably high tree tops, while the lines, form, shadows, and highlights of the model translated themselves by some magic into a drawing on his block.

Lino spent most of every day at Agee House. He stayed for all the classes taught there, whether he was enrolled in them or not. Ka'ihele Pono spoke to the other professors for him. Lino never gave a thought to official details of that kind. When most students left at five or so, Lino moved into one of the smaller rooms on the light side of the house and went on with his work.

Others admired Lino's work. They asked him how he was able to concentrate so completely. They asked about his other interests, other classes, friends, a girl friend? He told them how happy he was to be a student. There would be time for other things later in life, once he had reached the place where he had to go.

After the first few weeks of the semester no one thought to question Lino's right to use the smaller room as his private studio. The light was better for him there. The valley fell

away, opening up the sky on that side. But the rain still touched the leaves and ferns outside, and the air was sweet and wet with the perfume of rain and fern together. Lino was exactly in the place intended for him.

During that summer and fall Lino began painting. By the end of the semester he had completed thirty coherent, finished, and even mature works. They were of a significant five by seven feet in which he had sought to capture the foliage under rain in Mānoa's unique light.

Ka'ihele Pono was impressed. Lino had shown that he was more than a Freshman Art Major. He talked to Lino about the possibility of a one-man show at the University Gallery. But it was not to be. Ka'ihele Pono was unexpectedly relieved of his position in the Art Department. Somehow he had offended authority by giving Lino so much freedom.

Lino and Ka'ihele Pono went together to speak with The Dean of Fine Arts. They were told that it was not the task of The University to support genius, but rather to instruct the talented. That was how it ended. Lino was in a state of disarray.

Lino and Ka'ihele Pono worked together to move his equipment out of the little room at Agee House. They loaded everything into Lino's little Datsun Bluebird and drove down the valley towards the main campus.

As they reached the drive way of Hokele Kahiko they turned in without consciously intending to do so. Lino parked under the trees and both of them went into the bar. A few loungers were on the stools at the bar. Lino turned towards the table nearest the

painting over the fireplace. They were served as the rain tapped against the windows and lights began to appear in the drenched valley.

"It's difficult to take that painting seriously just now", said Lino. "I guess it's like a poem in a foreign language." He picked up his drink.

"You opened a door to the light", said Ka'ihele Pono, "And you attracted the attention of darkness". "Think of it as a natural balancing". "But it's what you are destined for". "You should get used to it."

The light had gone violet to indigo in Lino's valley. The place where his family had lived since first light. And the rain continued to sooth and to nourish without words as it always has in Mānoa.

